

Norte, and on to Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Upon Mexico's independence, the presidio fell into ruins. Rebuilding efforts didn't begin until 1853, with a small church. The present structure was completed in 1882, and little has changed since then.

I invite everyone to visit the city of San Elizario and the historic Mission Valley of El Paso to learn more about the cultures and traditions of the 23rd District of Texas.

I congratulate the new city.

□ 1045

SUPPORT THE PROTECT ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. LUMMIS). The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, today, I am rising in support of H.R. 4836, the Providing Rigorous Oversight to Terminate Extreme Criminal Transfers, or PROTECT, Act.

The PROTECT Act is a piece of legislation I have introduced with Congressman WOLF of Virginia. It will ensure that Guantanamo Bay detainees do not ever end up on American soil. The PROTECT Act will prevent the transfer to the United States of Gitmo detainees or any other unprivileged enemy belligerents captured overseas. Current transfer prohibitions are tied to annual funding bills. The PROTECT Act is a long-term solution to the detainee issue and punishes unlawful transfers by up to 5 years in prison. It is supported by the 9/11 Families for a Safe and Strong America.

We do need the PROTECT Act. Why do we need it? Because of lawlessness. This administration has demonstrated a pattern of lawless behavior that is creating a constitutional crisis in our Nation. The most recent example of this was the President's failure to notify Congress about the release of the Taliban Five.

Make no mistake. The administration fully intends to bring Gitmo detainees to American soil, read them their Miranda rights, and give them access to our civilian courts. Gitmo detainees do not belong here. Their presence would endanger our local communities. We need a solution that will deter this administration from looking for ways around the law. It is important to consider the administration's actions regarding this detainee issue.

First, President Obama signed Executive Order No. 13492 on January 22, 2009, to close the Guantanamo Bay detention center.

Second, in November 2009, the administration announced 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed would be tried in New York. It later abandoned the idea.

Third, on December 15, 2009, a letter signed by Hillary Clinton and several other administration officials was sent to Illinois Governor Pat Quinn, stating

the administration's intent to bring Gitmo detainees to the Thomson Correctional Center in Illinois.

These actions triggered an avalanche of opposition and forced the President to temporarily abandon his plan to bring these Gitmo detainees to the U.S.

However, in this year's State of the Union address, the President renewed his pledge to close Gitmo by stating:

And, with the Afghan war ending, this needs to be the year Congress lifts the remaining restrictions on detainee transfers and we close the prison at Guantanamo Bay.

Cliff Sloan, an administration special envoy for the closure of Guantanamo Bay, recently told ABC that the administration would have to work with Congress on changing the law so that detainees could be brought here.

He stated:

For detention and trial and prosecution, we think people should be allowed to be brought to the United States. Our supermax facilities are very secure, and we have hundreds of people convicted of terrorist offenses in our supermax prisons.

The President may not like having three branches of government, and he may not like checks and balances, but this system of checks and balances has served our Nation well. His lawless actions are creating a constitutional crisis, and it must stop. Gitmo detainees are coming to American soil unless we pass the PROTECT Act. Its criminal penalties will ensure that the President respects the law.

I encourage my colleagues to join me on the PROTECT Act, which includes a transfer prohibition, provides a long-term solution, enacts criminal penalties, and provides an exception for American citizens.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 49 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Rabbi Israel Zoberman, Congregation Beth Chaverim, Virginia Beach, Virginia, offered the following prayer:

Our one God of life's blessings who brings us together to be one family, gloriously diverse and gratefully united through the divine commandments of loving kindness.

In this House of Representatives' august Chamber of the most flourishing democracy, we give thanks to the awesome author of an endangered universe for the essential twin gifts of freedom

and responsibility. May You in Your infinite goodness ever guide our elected and appreciated lawmakers who are entrusted with the American people's agenda and the safeguarding of our precious liberties.

Mindful of living in our uncertain and unsettling world, let us reaffirm that the Creator's divinity and human dignity are inseparable, that he who upholds but one human life upholds a unique, irreplaceable universe of purpose and meaning.

May blemishes turn into blessings, hatred into love, violence into vision, and pain into promise in a global village at Shalom's peace at last.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. KILDEE led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

SONIA GARRO

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on behalf of Sonia Garro, a member of the pro-democracy group, Ladies in White, las Damas de Blanco, who, after being in prison for more than 2 years in one of Castro's gulags, will face a kangaroo trial on Monday. She faces the likelihood of 10 to 12 years in jail because she is brave enough to speak out, demanding respect for human rights and democratic change.

Cases like those of Sonia—and there are so many others—show us the true nature and brutality of the Castro regime. There have been efforts by Castro apologists aimed at changing our policy toward Cuba, but it is the Castro regime that must change its oppressive policies against the people of Cuba.

While Castro's thugs continue to flagrantly violate the fundamental liberties and the dignity of the Cuban people, the U.S. will stay on the side of

the Cuban people who call for freedom like Sonia Garro.

TIM RUSSERT EXHIBIT

(Mr. HIGGINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, since 2008, the "Inside Tim Russert's Office" exhibit has been on display at the Newseum here in Washington, D.C. This week the exhibit is in the process of relocating to the Buffalo History Museum in western New York.

This unique mix of personal and professional pieces of Tim's life will represent a homecoming, as he was born, raised, and began his career in Buffalo, New York. Even after moving to Washington, D.C., he never forgot his hometown and his dedication to his beloved Buffalo Bills. Whether working in politics or in journalism, Tim Russert made western New York proud as he exemplified the values that he learned right in our own community: love of family, faith, community, and country.

Mr. Speaker, it has been my honor to work with the Russert family, the Buffalo History Museum, and the Newseum in making this homecoming a reality. We eagerly await the debut of this expanded exhibit in the fall, including additional pieces that reflect Tim's south Buffalo roots and the story of Buffalo, the city he never forgot.

GET OUR ECONOMY BACK ON TRACK

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today the first quarter GDP numbers were revised downward, again, and now show the economy contracted by 2.9 percent in the opening months of 2014. The administration's spin machine cited cold weather as the root cause of this, but as critics noted, Canada's GDP grew by 1.8 percent in the first quarter. Was it warmer in Canada?

It is clear that this President is out of ideas about how to get our economy back on track. It now seems we have exhausted even his supply of excuses as well.

Being out of excuses is a positive development. Since this administration seems prone to believing their own spin, perhaps they will now, at long last, work with House Republicans on legislation that will put Americans back to work.

There are 40 House-passed bills awaiting action in the Senate. These bills will help. Will the President and his party act on them?

TRIA AND THE THREAT TO NEW YORK

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, the terrorist who is at this moment leading insurgent attacks against Iraq and cities in Iraq reportedly once said to U.S. soldiers, "I will see you guys in New York."

When he said it, he didn't mean he wanted to go to a Broadway show like "Jersey Boys" or "Beautiful." New York has been and continues to be a target for terrorists to attack. It is a towering symbol of all that makes America so exceptional. That is why it is so important for Congress to get the changes that were being made to the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act absolutely correct.

The TRIA bill that was recently reported out of the Financial Services Committee, as it now stands, would drive small- and medium-sized insurers out of the market and actually reduce the amount of insurance available. That is just the wrong way to go.

At a time like this, Congress should acknowledge that a very real threat still exists and pass the strongest TRIA bill possible. It is important to the American economy, and it is important for American jobs.

IRS INVESTIGATION

(Mr. SMITH of Nebraska asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call on the Department of Justice to appoint a special prosecutor to examine political targeting at the IRS. Abuse of the Tax Code for political purposes by the most feared and powerful agency in the Federal Government is simply unacceptable.

Despite promises of full cooperation, we have yet to receive all of the documents we have requested from the agency. The IRS tells us it cannot locate nearly 2 years of emails from Lois Lerner, a central figure in the investigation. We know the IRS has been aware of this concern for months and chose not to notify Congress in a timely manner.

We must work to restore confidence that Americans won't be targeted for their political beliefs. The House of Representatives has already voted on a bipartisan basis to urge the Department of Justice to appoint a special prosecutor, and I hope that the Department of Justice will work to assure the American people that the scales of justice also apply to the IRS.

RHODE ISLAND HOUSING

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Rhode Island Housing, a public agency that works to ensure that all people who live or work in Rhode Island can afford a healthy, safe home that meets their needs.

Rhode Island Housing has made a real impact on the lives of thousands of Rhode Islanders helping over 60,000 families buy homes; and its success is due in large part to its dedicated and talented staff, led by executive director, Richard Godfrey.

Last week, Rhode Island Housing was awarded over \$856,000 in Federal funds to continue its important work to end homelessness in Rhode Island.

A good home provides a foundation upon which individuals and families thrive, children learn and grow, and communities prosper; but finding affordable, healthy housing has become a real concern for middle class working Americans. According to the Providence Journal, in 2012 a Rhode Island household earning the State's median income could afford a median-priced house in just 11 of our 39 cities and towns.

For more than 40 years, Rhode Island Housing has been providing valuable assistance to middle class Rhode Islanders to help them become homeowners and overcome the many challenges they face. I am delighted that these funds will support their efforts to end homelessness in Rhode Island, and I am proud to support their outstanding work to strengthen our communities.

POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER AWARENESS MONTH

(Mr. DESJARLAIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to tell my colleagues about H. Res. 631, which supports the goals and ideas of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Awareness Month. PTSD is a condition affecting more than 5.2 million Americans.

Our heroic servicemen and -women face daily atrocities and dangers on the battlefield. When they return home, adjusting to everyday life can be a brutal challenge, and living with PTSD can become a waking nightmare. Without treatment, PTSD can lead to alcohol and drug abuse, flashbacks, depression, and suicide. Sadly, because of the stigma surrounding mental health in our country, less than 40 percent of returning military personnel seek help.

My first job out of medical school was at a VA hospital. I witnessed firsthand the toll PTSD takes on our soldiers and their loved ones.

I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 631. Show our brave men and women in uniform that we have their backs like they have ours.

Thank you to Bob Mims of Tennessee's Fourth District for his continued efforts on this critical issue.

PASS COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

(Mr. HINOJOSA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)